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ABSTRACT

Recommendations of a Southeast Missouri task force concerning high school preparation for Southeast Missouri State University are offered. Attention is directed to: requirements for admission to the university, academic competencies that are necessary for success at the university, qualities and competencies that contribute to college success, and a recommended list of high school courses. Standards for Missouri residents who receive regular admission to the university are identified, along with information on regular admission for out-of-state students, and provisional admission. Skills that students need are identified for the following basic academic competencies: reading, writing, speaking and listening, mathematics, reasoning, and studying. Personal qualities and other competencies and skills that contribute to college success include: self-discipline, punctuality, a respect for standards, pride in personal achievement, decision-making and problem-solving skills, keyboarding and typing skills, and computer literacy. High school course units that are recommended to prepare for college are listed under the following subjects: English, mathematics, science, social studies, foreign languages, and speech communication. (SW)

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PREPARATION

for

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at

SOUTHEAST MISSOURI STATE UNIVERSITY

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TASK FORCE ON RECOMMENDED HIGH SCHOOL PREPARATION

Charge

The purpose of the task force is to develop a set of recommendations that will guide high school students toward successful admission to the University. The primary responsibility of the group is to develop a recommended list of courses for students desiring regular admission to the University. This list should reflect recently strengthened high school graduation requirements. Additionally, the task force may identify other courses and activities which best enable students to pursue college level work and prepare statements of expectations which suggest experiences, qualities, and competencies that might enhance preparation for college and lead to greater student success.

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INTRODUCTION

A university is many things. However, because it affords students an opportunity for planned and structured academic study beyond high school, it is the institution in our society which makes it possible for an individual to become more nearly an educated person. Attending a university affords one opportunities for a wide range of experiences, in addition to formal study, by which to advance one's level of education. The library, athletic teams, concerts, plays, speakers, clubs, and social activities are all important aspects of university life as well as important aspects of community life for all persons. However, these are not the reason one attends a university. One attends a university to advance to a new level in becoming an educated person.

An educated person is someone who has acquired academic knowledge and competencies, who has developed strong work habits and study skills, and who is able to think critically and evaluatively about that which is seen, heard, or read. It is a person who has acquired the traits of self-reliance, initiative, integrity, compassion, resourcefulness, courage, creativity, and responsibility.

Learning is a lifelong process. A student entering Southeast Missouri State University should already have made substantial progress toward becoming an educated person. The planned and structured learning experiences at the University should build upon and move forward the educational level a student has attained in high school.

The recommendations set forth in this Report are directed toward promoting a better understanding among secondary school students, their parents, their teachers, and their communities of the level of attainment that should be reached in high school if the student is to be successful at the University.

The recommendations are presented in four groupings:

1. Requirements for Admission to the University.
2. Academic competencies that are necessary for success at the University.
3. Qualities and competencies which contribute to success at the University.
4. Recommended list of high school courses.

The University has a responsibility to work closely with secondary schools to assure understanding of these admission standards and to develop appropriate means to assist students in meeting them. The University should particularly provide an avenue for students while still in high school to demonstrate achievement of satisfactory scores for reading, mathematics, and writing.

REQUIREMENTS FOR ADMISSION TO THE UNIVERSITY

Regular Admission for Beginning Freshmen

Regular admission to the University is recognition and acknowledgment of a prior record of academic performance and achievement at a level which demonstrates capability for successful academic performance and achievement at Southeast Missouri State University. To that end, the following policy is recommended:

Missouri residents who receive regular admission to Southeast Missouri State University shall meet the following standards:

1. High school diploma or appropriate GED score.
2. A minimum ACT composite score of 15.
3. Satisfactory scores on each of the screening tests for reading, mathematics, and writing.
4. An overall GPA of 2.0 or above on a 4-point scale for high school courses.
5. A minimum of 15 units of academic preparation in high school with a GPA of 2.0 on a 4-point scale, including a minimum of 4 units in English, 2 units in mathematics, 2 units in science, 3 units in social studies, and 4 additional units from English, mathematics, science, social studies, foreign language, or speech.

Regular Admission for Out-of-State Students

Out-of-state residents who receive regular admission to Southeast Missouri State University shall meet all of the above standards for Missouri

residents and shall have a minimum ACT composite score of 19.

Regular Admission for Transfer Students

Students who have attended another college or university, but have completed fewer than thirty (30) semester hours must meet the same standards as beginning freshmen.

Provisional Admission

Students who do not meet the standards for regular admission may receive provisional admission.

Provisionally admitted students:

1. May enroll in regular University coursework (courses numbered 100 and above) only after achieving a satisfactory reading examination score.
2. May not "drop" developmental courses.
3. May enroll for a maximum of twelve semester hours including developmental courses in a regular semester or six semester hours including developmental courses in the summer session.

Students initially receiving provisional admission will receive regular admission when all of the following standards are met:

1. Completion of a minimum of thirty (30) semester hours of credit applicable on a degree with a GPA of 2.0 or above on a 4-point scale.
2. Satisfactory score on English screening test or satisfactory completion of EN-099, Writing Skills Workshop.
3. Satisfactory score on mathematics screening test or satisfactory completion of MA-099, Developmental Algebra.

ACADEMIC COMPETENCIES THAT ARE NECESSARY FOR SUCCESS AT THE UNIVERSITY

Academic Preparation for College: What Students Need to Know and Be Able to Do, a 1983 publication of The College Board, contained a section entitled "Basic Academic Competencies." In the more recent Academic Preparation for the World of Work, The College Board concludes that these Basic Academic Competencies are as necessary for the world of work as they are for success in college.

With the permission and encouragement of The College Board, this material has been adopted by the Task Force and is presented here as a part of our Report.

THE BASIC ACADEMIC COMPETENCIES

The Basic Academic Competencies are the broad intellectual skills essential to effective work in all fields of college study. They provide a link across the disciplines of knowledge although they are not specific to any particular discipline.

The Basic Academic Competencies are reading, writing, speaking and listening, mathematics, reasoning, and studying. These competencies are interrelated to and interdependent with the Basic Academic Subjects. Without such competencies, knowledge of history, science, language, and all other subjects is unattainable.

The Basic Academic Competencies are developed abilities, the outcomes of learning and intellectual discourse. There are different levels of competency; they can be defined in measurable terms.

Although the Basic Academic Competencies are not always identified explicitly, spelling them out provides a way to tell students what is expected of them. Knowledge of what is expected is crucial to effective learning.

In order to do effective work in college, it is essential that all students have the following academic competencies.

Reading

The ability to identify and comprehend the main and subordinate ideas in a written work and to summarize the ideas in one's own words.

The ability to recognize different purposes and methods of writing, to identify a writer's point of view and tone, and to interpret a writer's meaning inferentially as well as literally.

The ability to separate one's personal opinions and assumptions from a writer's.

The ability to vary one's reading speed and method (survey, skim, review, question, and master) according to the type of material and one's purpose for reading.

The ability to use the features of books and other reference materials, such as table of contents, preface, introduction, titles and subtitles, index, glossary, appendix, bibliography.

The ability to define unfamiliar words by decoding, using contextual clues, or by using a dictionary.

Writing

The ability to conceive ideas about a topic for the purpose of writing.

The ability to organize, select, and relate ideas and to outline and develop them in coherent paragraphs.

The ability to write Standard English sentences with correct:
- sentence structure;
- verb forms;
- punctuation, capitalization, possessives, plural forms, and other matters of mechanics;
- word choice and spelling.

The ability to vary one's writing style, including vocabulary and sentence structure, for different readers and purposes.

The ability to improve one's own writing by restructuring, correcting errors, and rewriting.

The ability to gather information from primary and secondary sources; to write a report using this research; to quote, paraphrase, and summarize accurately; and to cite sources properly.

Speaking and Listening

The ability to engage critically and constructively in the exchange of ideas, particularly during class discussions and conferences with instructors.

The ability to answer and ask questions coherently and concisely, and to follow spoken instructions.

The ability to identify and comprehend the main and subordinate ideas in lectures and discussions, and to report accurately what others have said.

The ability to conceive and develop ideas about a topic for the purpose of speaking to a group; to choose and organize related ideas; to present them clearly in Standard English; and to evaluate similar presentations by others.

The ability to vary one's use of spoken language to suit different situations.

Mathematics

The ability to perform, with reasonable accuracy, the computations of addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division using natural numbers, fractions, decimals, and integers.

The ability to make and use measurements in both traditional and metric units.

The ability to use effectively the mathematics of:
- integers, fractions, and decimals;
- ratios, proportions, and percentages;
- roots and powers;
- algebra;
- geometry.

The ability to make estimates and approximations, and to judge the reasonableness of a result.

The ability to formulate and solve a problem in mathematical terms.

The ability to select and use appropriate approaches and tools in solving problems (mental computation, trial and error, paper-and-pencil techniques, calculator, and computer).

The ability to use elementary concepts of probability and statistics.

Reasoning

The ability to identify and formulate problems, as well as the ability to propose and evaluate ways to solve them.

The ability to recognize and use inductive and deductive reasoning, and to recognize fallacies in reasoning.

The ability to draw reasonable conclusions from information found in various sources, whether written, spoken, or displayed in tables and graphs, and to defend one's conclusions rationally.

The ability to comprehend, develop, and use concepts and generalizations.

The ability to distinguish between fact and opinion.

Studying

This set of abilities is different in kind from those that precede it. They are set forth here because they constitute the key abilities in learning how to learn. Successful study skills are necessary for acquiring the other five competencies as well as for achieving the desired outcomes in the Basic Academic Subjects. Students are unlikely to be efficient in any part of their work without these study skills.

The ability to set study goals and priorities consistent with stated course objectives and one's own progress, to establish surroundings and habits conducive to learning independently or with others, and to follow a schedule that accounts for both short- and long-term projects.

The ability to locate and use resources external to the classroom (for example, libraries, computers, interviews, and direct observation), and to incorporate knowledge from such sources into the learning process.

The ability to develop and use general and specialized vocabularies, and to use them for reading, writing, speaking, listening, computing, and studying.

The ability to understand and to follow customary instructions for academic work in order to recall, comprehend, analyze, summarize, and report the main ideas from reading, lectures, and other academic experiences; and to synthesize knowledge and apply it to new situations.

The ability to prepare for various types of examinations and to devise strategies for pacing, attempting or omitting questions, thinking, writing, and editing according to the type of examination; to satisfy other assessments of learning in meeting course objectives such as laboratory performance, class participation, simulation, and students' evaluations.

The ability to accept constructive criticism and learn from it.

QUALITIES AND COMPETENCIES WHICH CONTRIBUTE TO SUCCESS AT THE UNIVERSITY

I. PERSONAL QUALITIES

A. A sense of work ethic including punctuality, attendance, perseverance, and self-discipline.

B. A respect for standards, structure, and authority.

C. The ability to work (function) independently as well as to maintain interpersonal and group relationships.

D. A sense of pride in personal achievement and accomplishment.

E. The ability to assess one's strengths and weaknesses to establish priorities and set goals.

F. The ability to be self-motivated and self-directed.

G. A sense of integrity.

H. A sense of responsibility.

I. A willingness to participate in co-curricular activities.

II. COMPETENCIES AND SKILLS

A. Decision-making and problem-solving skills through inductive and deductive reasoning.

B. Observing skills, including the ability to recognize, identify, and to interpret aspects of one's physical surroundings and social environment.

C. Keyboarding and/or typing skills.

D. Laboratory skills.

E. Computer literacy, including a basic knowledge of how computers work and common computer terminology.

RECOMMENDED LIST OF HIGH SCHOOL COURSES

This recommended list includes those courses deemed to have significant potential for developing the expected competencies of students. It is important to recognize that the degree to which a course fulfills this intent is dependent upon the method and content of the course as well as the level of participation and personal involvement on the part of the learner.

Although the recommended list does not include the Arts--visual arts, theater, music, and dance, they are extremely important and offer students opportunities of self-expression that go beyond ordinary speaking and writing. The Arts challenge and extend human experience. They can engage the imagination, foster flexibility and adaptability, develop self-discipline and build self-confidence.

Students in selecting courses to meet the 15 units of academic preparation required for regular admission should be guided by the following recommendations:

English

The requirement in English is 4 units. It is recommended that the equivalent of 2 units of expository writing and 2 units of literature be included.

Expository writing
Literature

Mathematics

The requirement in mathematics is 2 units. It is recommended that one additional unit be included.

Algebra
Advanced Algebra
Plane Geometry
Probability and Statistics
Trigonometry
Pre Calculus

Science

The requirement in science is 2 units. It is recommended that one additional unit be included.

Biology
Chemistry
Physics
Advanced Biology
Advanced Chemistry

Social Studies

The requirement in social studies is 3 units.

American History
Economics
Geography
Missouri History
Civics/American Government
World History
Comparative Government

Foreign Languages

It is recommended that 2 units of the same foreign language be taken if foreign language is included.

Any foreign language

Speech Communication

Speech or Debate

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